



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2020

FROM: COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WARDS: ALL
DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON CITRUS GREENING DISEASE IN RIVERSIDE

ISSUE:

Receive an update on the citrus greening disease within the City of Riverside as reported by the Director of California's Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Division and the County of Riverside Agricultural Commissioner's office.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council receive this update and provide guidance on outreach to raise awareness and protect the City's citrus assets.

BACKGROUND:

Huanglongbing (HLB) is a deadly plant disease that infects and kills citrus trees. Although researchers are attempting to find a solution to HLB, there is currently no cure for this deadly citrus disease. The first citrus tree infected with HLB in California was found in Hacienda Heights (Los Angeles County) in 2012. To date, more than 2,000 trees in southern California have tested positive for HLB and have been removed and destroyed by California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) staff. Fortunately, HLB has been limited to residential citrus trees and has not yet been found in any of California's commercial groves.

California's commercial citrus industry has an estimated value of \$3.4 billion and supports approximately 22,000 jobs. HLB, which is spread by the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), remains a threat to the state's citrus industry. This disease, which infected commercial citrus groves throughout Florida, resulted in an economic loss of \$7.8 billion in that state.

To combat the spread of HLB, California's citrus industry created the Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Program (CPDPP). Program activities are funded by the state's citrus growers and is administered by CDFA. Under the program, CDFA has established an HLB quarantine zone which includes jurisdictions located in four southern California counties (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino).

DISCUSSION:

HLB was first detected in Riverside County in a residential neighborhood of the City of Riverside on July 25, 2017. Although HLB has not been identified in any commercial groves, an ACP was confirmed positive for *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* (CLas), the bacteria that causes HLB, earlier this summer in a commercial grove in the Woodcrest area. Following this confirmation, CDFA staff conducted treatments and visual surveys in the area to collect plant samples and any additional ACP that may have been present. All samples that were collected from the grove and adjacent properties were tested and confirmed to be negative.

CDFA staff continues to work closely with county agricultural commissioners and homeowners to inspect and obtain sample plant material when HLB is suspected. If samples test positive for HLB, residential trees will be removed at no cost to residents. CDFA and county agricultural commissioners are also working with elected officials and other community leaders to educate the public on the symptoms of HLB and best practices to contain the spread of HLB.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving this update.

Prepared by:	David Welch, Community & Economic Development Director
Certified as to availability of funds:	Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer / City Treasurer
Approved by:	Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form:	Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachment:	Presentation
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